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ABSTRACT

If, indeed, there is a formula for developing an integrated bilingual and cross-cultural curriculum, the Northwest Arctic School District's experience would suggest the following key elements of the development process: base the curriculum on the rapidly changing social context, rather than on stereotyped bicultural concepts; ensure local control of educational policy; treat the whole school curriculum, rather than separating language and cultural concerns; be honest and keep the curriculum processes clear and simple--develop simple educational goals and then achieve them; develop school-community unity by keeping advisory channels open. The Northwest Arctic School District operates 11 schools in an area of 36,000 square miles north of the Arctic Circle. It is an Inupiat Eskimo region, but the Inupiaq language has been almost lost. A fortuitous chain of events has delivered local control of education to rural Alaska. The District is one of 21 Rural Education Attendance Areas, which are governed by locally elected Regional School Boards. Now two years in existence, the District has set goals for students in relation to basic skills, life skills and cross-cultural skills and is pursuing a curriculum development process which incorporates staff, community, and program development. This paper discusses some of the problems and processes that have occurred in the development of a community-based curriculum, gives an example of the integrated approach, explores issues regarding the legal and funding structures, and offers some brief guidelines for the development of an integrated bilingual and cross-cultural curriculum. (Author/NQ)

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN INTEGRATED BILINGUAL AND CROSS-CULTURAL CURRICULUM IN AN ARCTIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

A Paper Presented at
The First Congress on Education
of the
Canadian School Trustees Association

June 21, 1978

Toronto, Ontario

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The Development of a Bilingual and Cross-Cultural Curriculum in an Arctic School District

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ABSTRACT

If, indeed, there is a formula for developing an integrated bilingual and cross-cultural curriculum, experience in the Northwest Arctic School District would suggest the following key elements of the development process:

- Basing the curriculum on the rapidly changing social context, rather than on stereotyped bicultural (dual society) concepts.
- Ensuring local control of educational policy.
- Treating the whole school curriculum, rather than separating language and cultural concerns off in a fragment of the curriculum.
- Being honest, and keeping curriculum processes clear and simple - developing simple educational goals and then achieving them.
- Developing school-community unity by keeping advisory channels open.

The Northwest Arctic School District operates eleven schools in an area of 36,000 square miles north of the Arctic Circle. It is an Iñupiat Eskimo region, but Iñupiaq language has been almost lost. (Its use was strongly discouraged under previous school administrations.) A fortuitous chain of events has delivered local control of education to rural Alaska. The Northwest Arctic School District is one of 21 Rural Education Attendance Areas, which are governed by locally elected Regional School Boards. Now two years in existence, the Northwest Arctic School District has set goals for students in relation to basic skills, life skills and cross-cultural skills and is pursuing a curriculum development process which incorporates staff development, community development and program development.

In this paper, some of the problems and processes that have occurred in the development of a community-based curriculum are discussed. An example of the integrated approach is given, and issues regarding the legal and funding structures are explored. Finally, some modest guidelines for the development of an integrated bilingual and cross-cultural curriculum are offered.

PROBLEMS AND PROCESSES

School/Community Dissonance: Local Control

> "Long ago when they built a Council House they built them for a happy gathering place. They gather together for happy occasions such as dancing, Eskimo games and feasts. They used the Council House for teaching Eskimo way of living."
>
> "There were no set teachers."
>
> "Eskimos are smart. They learn a person's word of advice."
>
> "We were there in the time when there was silence....the time when Eskimo way of living was like a still water now has become bad like waves pounding."
>
> "And these young people our children are living in the white man's way and have become a part of them. They have become that way and there are no Council Houses."
>
> "The government is giving the education to our children today. The information we have told on the Eskimo culture will be studied by our grandchildren in the school." [1]

Education in a mass society is subversive and assimilative, especially in cross-cultural situations. The strain, or dissonance, between school and rural communities in the arctic stems in part from the the vast differences between traditional Eskimo learning and "school learning." In traditional Eskimo society, children learned by watching silently, and following the lead of their elders. [2] Twenty-thousand years of experience in the arctic

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[1] Dialogue from the Third Annual Northwest Iñupiat Elders Conference sponsored by Mauneluk Association. (Kotzebue, Alaska: January, 1978). Translated by Hanna Loon.

[2] "People everywhere behave in accordance with patterns which they have learned in the process of growing up in society and which make sense to them as an overall pattern for living. Whatever a person in one tradition may think or feel about the efficiency or sensibleness of another person's customs, to those who practice them they are right and good behaviors. They are so because they have been held up as proper by parents and other respected persons from childhood. They are so because they have been learned slowly and painfully through the years." Edward Spicer, Human Problems in Technological Change (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1952), p. 286.

environment comprised a sound basis for the cultural content and educational methods of traditional Eskimo society. But encroachment of the technological society on rural Alaska has created an upheaval in Eskimo society which is characterized in the schools by:

> The shift from the need for an individual to learn something which everyone agrees he should wish to know, to the will of some individual to teach something which it is not agreed that anyone has any desire to know. [3]

That is, economic development in rural Alaska created a crisis in values, which was exagerated by a doctrinaire school curriculum unrelated to the life experience of the people.

Prior to the establishment of local control of education, the curriculum in rural Alaska was nothing more than a transplanted program such as could be found in any school in the lower forty-eight states. [4] The traditions, values and beliefs of the dominant white middle and upper classes were those primiarly reflected in the school curriculum, and Eskimo children were discouraged from using their Iñupiaq language in the school. There was no organized course of studies about the State of Alaska, nor any attention to Native Studies, and three successive generations of language suppression had all but eliminated the Iñupiaq language. Today, only the older people are truly fluent, and most entering school-children are not speakers at all.

Local control in rural Alaska has its roots in the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act which created regional Native Association to hold the Native lands and payments ceded to Native Alaskans in the act. [5] The Northwest Alaska Native Association became the

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[3] Margaret Mead, "Our Educational Emphases in Primitive Perspective," George Spindler, ed., Education and Culture (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1963), p. 312. This article originally appeared in The American Journal of Sociology, XLVIII, No. 6, May 1943.

[4] John Collier, Jr., Alaskan Eskimo Education: A Film Analysis of Cultural Confrontation in the Schools (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, Inc., 1973).

[5] Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, Public Law 92-203, December 18, 1971, 85 Stat 688 (Title 43 USC § 1601-1624).

holder of lands in the Northwest Region, which encompasses the Kobuk, Noatak and Selawik River Valleys, and the coastal lands between Deering and Kivalina, traditional lands of the Iñupiat people. The Association later divided into a profit making corporation (NANA Regional Corporation) and a non-profit association (Mauneluk Association). Local control of the land stimulated the movement for local control of education.

Until 1975 most rural students who wanted to finish high school had to leave their villages to attend schools operated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs or the State. For Northwest Arctic students, this meant traveling as far away as Sitka or even the lower forty-eight. Native Alaskan boarding students rarely got home to see their families, and had little in common with other students. During the time they were away at school, they were removed from village life, and not learning the traditional skills important for survival in the arctic. Needless to say, there were very few high school graduates among Alaska Natives.

In 1973 a group of rural Alaskan students, Molly Hootch et. al., brought a class action suit against the State Department of Education, charging discrimination in the State's failure to provide a secondary education such that students could live at home while attending school. [6] The Hootch case was settled out of court in 1975 where it was agreed that Native boarding high schools were not an equal educational opportunity to the local high schools attended by most white Alaskans. At that time, the Alaska Unorganized Borough (formerly, State Operated Schools) was divided into 21 Rural Educational Attendance Areas (REAA's) to operate elementary and secondary schools in rural regions.

The Northwest Arctic School District is the REAA which encompasses the Iñupiat Eskimo lands of the Northwest or NANA Region. The District has an eleven member Regional School Board which is elected at large by the people of the region and establishes district-wide educational policy. Each of the eleven village schools in the District has a Community School Committee which governs local school affairs.

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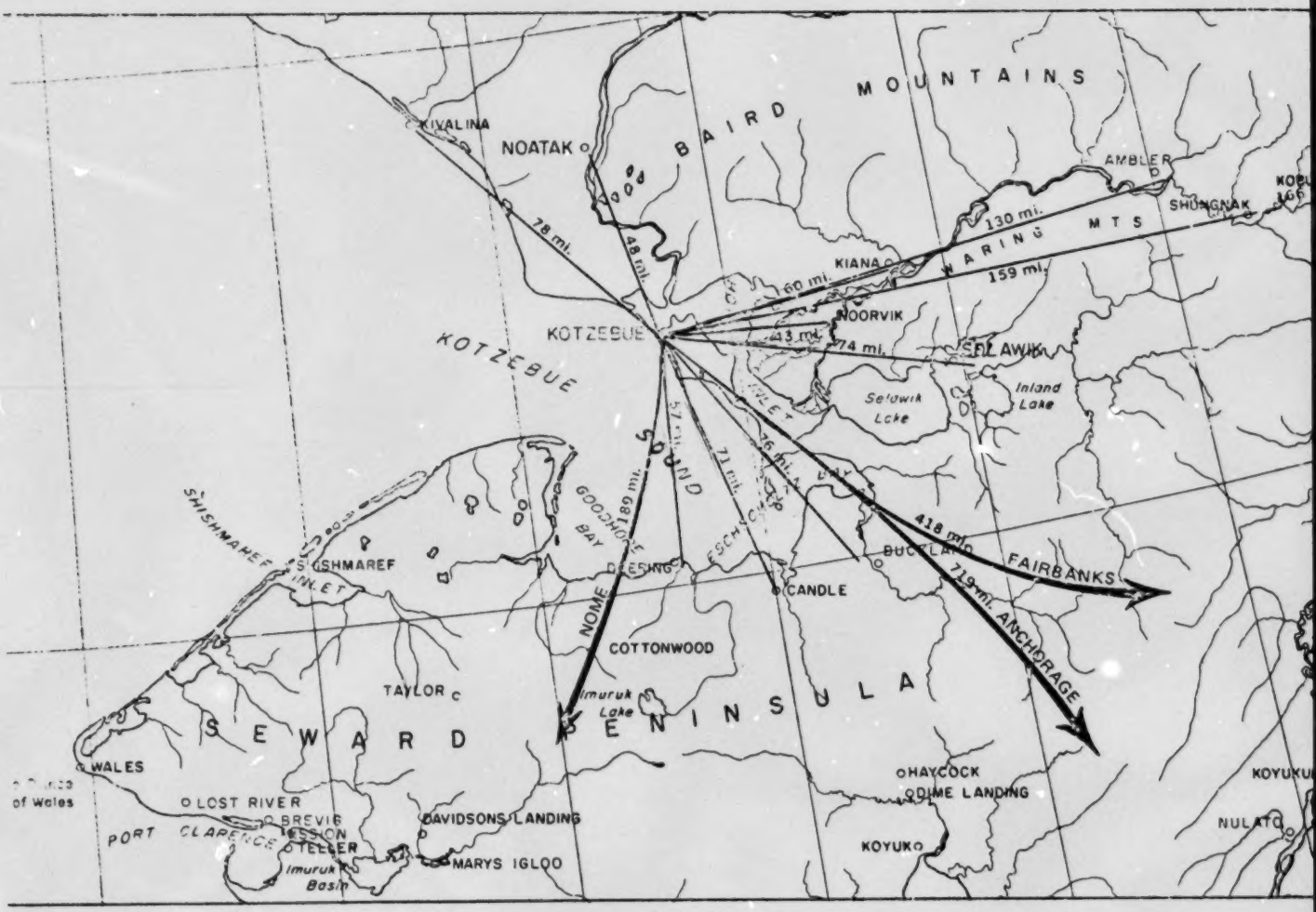
[6] Hootch v. Alaska State Operated School System, Alaska, Alaska 536, P.2d 793 (1975).

THE NORTHWEST ARCTIC REGION OF ALASKA [7]



In its first year of operation, the Northwest Arctic School District brought the two remaining Bureau of Indian Affairs schools into the District, and began establishing secondary school programs in the villages of the region. Barely two years old, the School District now offers high school education in all but three of the villages and education is governed by elected representatives of the people.

The fortuitous chain of events which has brought local political and economic, and now educational, control to rural Alaska, has done much to eliminate the dissonance between school and community in the Northwest Arctic. Where school policy is made by the parents of the school children, a community commitment to education develops. When imposed from outside, what might have been the same prescription has failed repeatedly.

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[7] Map by the Alaska Department of Community and Regional Affairs, 1976.

Thus, one antecedent to the reduction of linguistic and cultural barriers in rural school programs is the recognition that language and culture are but two of a number of social forces affecting the lives of rural arctic people. Researchers in culture and education have long been aware of the systematic disenfranchisement of minority cultural ways in the educational system of the United States. Among all minority groups, Native Americans have fared the least well in the traditional educational system,[8] and the Northwest Arctic was no exception.

Today, the most distinguishing feature of life in the Northwest Arctic is not language, culture, politics or economics, per se, but a combination of these in rapid change. Iñupiat people exhibit as many and varied life styles as do people anywhere in America, from completely traditional to thoroughly modern. In times of rapid change, the extent to which a group of people can gain control over the political and economic forces in their lives, is the extent to which the educational system can be adapted to meet their changing linguistic and cultural needs.

Approach to Curriculum

In recognition of the blatant disenfranchisement of Iñupiat people under previous school administrations, the Northwest Arctic School District has been pursuing a community-based curriculum development process since its beginning two years ago. This process necessitates a reversal of the former assimilative role of the schools: making them reflective of the changing social structure, allowing latitude for diversity of cultural values in the school curriculum, and, in the case of the Northwest Arctic, fostering a revival of the Iñupiaq language.

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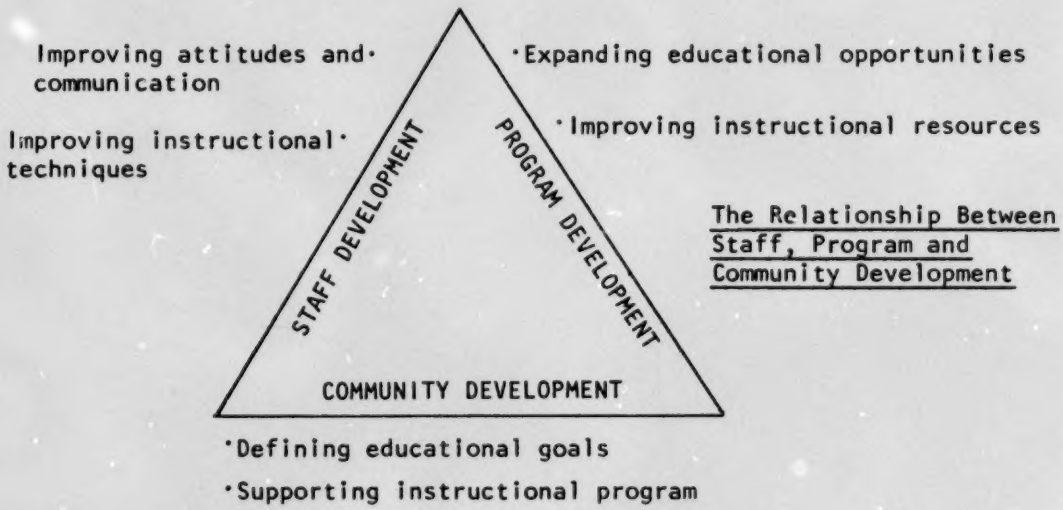
[8] Native Americans as a group have the smallest percentage of high school and college graduates of all minority groups in the United States. This can be partly attributed to the irrelevence of the traditional school curriculum in an isolated, rural environment, and partly to the tenacity of Native American cultures which were evolved to cope with those environments, especially in the Arctic. c.f. "A Classroom is Not a Fish Camp" by John Collier, Jr., in J. Orvik & R. Barnhardt (eds.), Cultural Influences in Alaskan Native Education (Center for Northern Educational Research at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, 1974)., and, R.J. Havighurst and E. Fuchs, To Live on This Earth: American Indian Education (New York, Doubleday, 1972) for documentation of the failure of Native American Students in standard American schools.

A community-based curriculum development process is a whole-system process. This requires a three faceted approach to curriculum development in which staff development, community development and program development are all included in the curriculum development process. Most educators treat only the school program (plans, textbooks, learning experiences) in attempting to solve curriculum problems. In the Northwest Arctic, we assume that no curricular change can actually take place unless the community wants it and supports it, and unless the staff has the necessary motivation and expertise. The diagram below depicts the relationship between staff, program and community development in the curriculum development process of the Northwest Arctic School District.



The Relationship Between Staff, Program and Community Development

At the same time, the Northwest Arctic School District rejects the bilingual/bicultural approach to curriculum development because of the static view of culture embodied in the approach, and because the district's students are not bilingual, but rather are <u>becoming</u> bilingual. In the past, bilingual/bicultural distinctions have served to aggravate the students' feeling of "anomie" [9] by presenting them with the ludicrous choice between becoming a "real Eskimo" such as their grandparents were, or becoming a "white man," neither of which choices are practically available

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[9] "Being without a culture"

to them. [10] The Northwest Arctic School District takes the view that there are not two separate societies (as implied by the bilingual/bicultural approach) rather that there is a viable modern-day Iñupiat culture and language which has been ignored in the school curriculum. Thus, the district is attempting to develop an integrated curriculum based on the individual and combined needs of Iñupiat students in a rapidly changing social and economic structure. In this integrated curriculum, Iñupiat language and culture will not be treated separately, but incorporated through the whole school program, and reflected in staffing patterns and community relations as well. [11]

In a like manner, other educational programs which have traditionally categorized or labled students, such as special education, are being incorporated into the total plan of service concept.

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[10] "The important point is that approaches which define the problem in terms of cultural and linguistic handicaps are doomed to failure. The problem is with the schools, and it is schools that must be the focus for change. Both school districts and teacher training institutions must face up to that hard fact." M. Reyes Mazon and Thomas A. Arciniega, "Competency-Based Education and Culturally Different: A Ray of Hope, or More of the Same?" in William A. Hunter, ed., Multicultural Education Through Competency-Based Teacher Education (Washington, D.C.: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1974), p. 164.

[11] In his poetic essay on "The Rise and Fall of Ethnic Studies," Vine Deloria says, "The original conception of objective study of community life and values neglected to remember that objective analysis orients the subject matter from production to consumption. And what has been happening in minority communities that have been involved with ethnic studies as a discipline is that they have produced an objectification of their own culture and then proceeded to become consumers of their own products." p. 132. "In order to escape this epistemological dilemma both students and teachers have a task as formidable as any faced by any period of history. They must in effect create new logics and new systems of explanation based not so much on discovery of great truths but on emotional satisfaction of the moment. Learning must become the consumption of diverse and conflicting facts and experiences, all of which carry different energy contents, and the conclusions which can be reached by reflection on the period within which the experience occurred." p. 134 in M.D. Stent, W.R. Hazard & H.N. Rivlin (eds.), Cultural Pluralism in Education: A Mandate for Change (New York: Fordham University and the Appleton-Century-Crofts Educational Division of Meredith Corporation, 1973), pp. 131-136.

The integrated approach to curriculum development, then is characterized by, as Friere [12] suggests, a process of naming the schooling situation as it is seen from the point of view of the people of the Northwest Arctic, rather than as defined by educators and officials elsewhere.

To operationalize this process of curriculum development based on individual and combined student needs the District has inititated a number of concurrent activities to promote program development, staff development and community development, with the aim of instituting an integrated and excellent curriculum in the schools, a curriculum which has the necessary support of the community and to which can be brought the professional expertise necessary for success.

The superintendent maintains two advisory committees on curriculum and employs a curriculum director, who coordinates the curriculum development function in the district. One advisory committee is made up of professional school staff members (teachers, principals and aides), and the other is made up of community members (parents, community school committee members, and school aides). Each advisory group has its own unique perspective on curriculum development in the district and different roles have emerged for each group, as shown on the next page.

As issues in district-wide curriculum development surface, their implications for program, staff and community development are explored. Staff and community involvement in planning for program changes are elicited through the advisory committees, as well as through informal and other organizational networks. Communications are a key to effective integrated curriculum development, with a constant two-way flow of information between school staff and community. It is also important to allow curriculum issues, and thus

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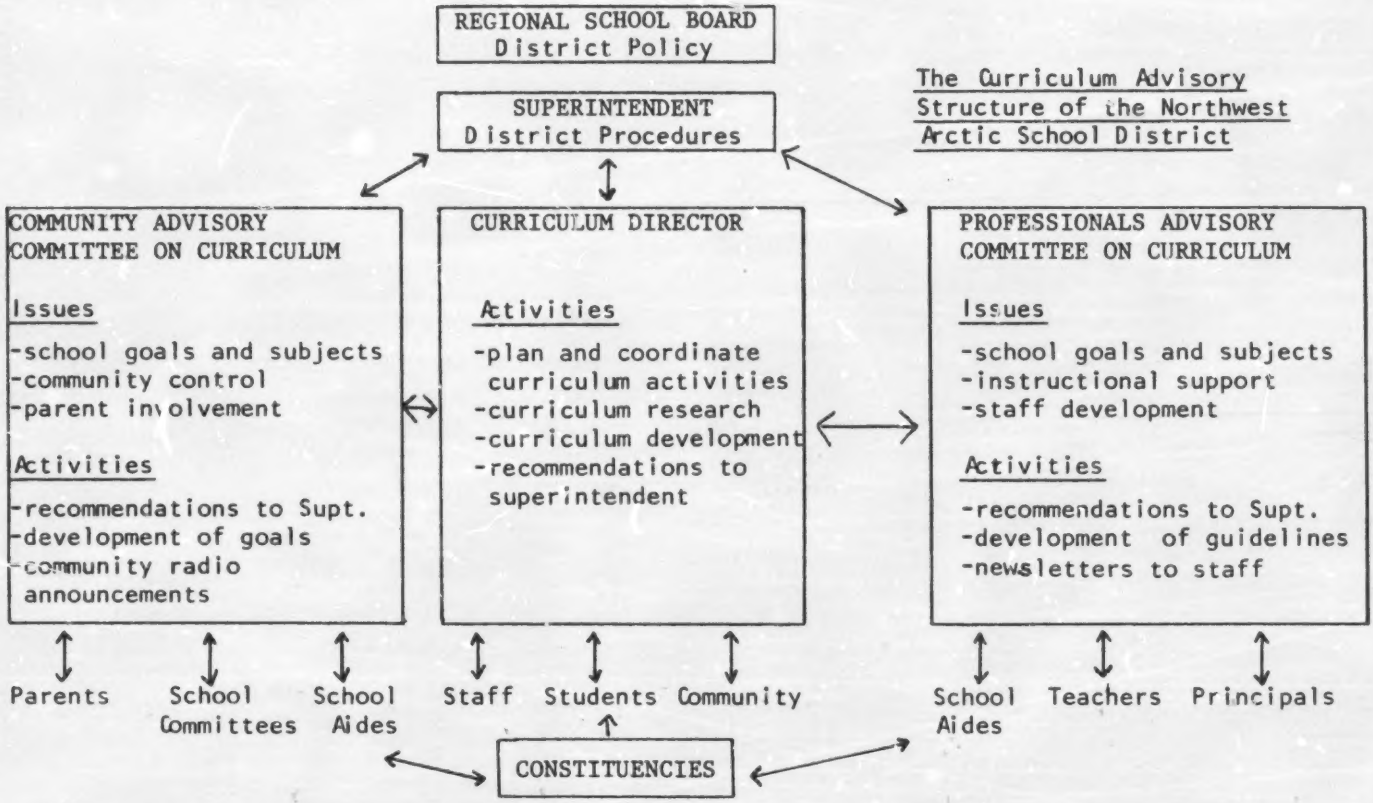
[12] "One cannot expect positive results from an educational or political action program which fails to respect the particular view of the world held by the people. Such a program constitutes cultural invasion, good intentions notwithstanding." Paulo Friere, Pedagogy of the Oppressed (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), p. 84.



The Curriculum Advisory Structure of the Northwest Arctic School District

the curriculum, to emerge from the community and its needs rather than to be prescribed by outsiders. Thus, the emerging roles of the community vis à vis the school staff in the curriculum development process are those of goals setting vis à vis implementing education to reach those goals.

Such a curriculum development process is time consuming, but ensures the involvement of all groups who have a vested interest in the education of children in the Northwest Arctic. In the two years since it was established, the district has held community meetings and in-service training at each community school for the purpose of identifying needs for curriculum development. Many schools have begun the development of a sequenced program of studies which will result in a planned school curriculum (for the first time in most villages). The superintendent has reorganized the district office program staff in order to provide more direct services to students and schools based on identified needs rather than traditional school roles. Principals have been assigned to most village schools in order to provide more direct on-site educational leadership and ensure continuity of program for students.

As a reward for patience in this time-consuming community-based curriculum development process, the district now has a simple statement of goals, to which there is wide agreement and commitment. The statement was developed and approved unanimously by the two advisory committees on curriculum. It reads as follows:

GOALS OF THE NORTHWEST ARCTIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Northwest Arctic Region is in a process of rapid economic, political and social change. The main concerns for schools in this region are:

-Educating children for the many and changing lifestyles they will lead, whether in the village or in the city.

-Developing leadership in every aspect of community life.

-Promoting better cross-cultural understanding and Iñugułiq kamaksriigałikun ("growing up with respect").

The Northwest Arctic School District will strive toward the following goals for students:

1. Students will become proficient in the basic skills required for educational and societal success.

2. Students will acquire introductory skills and experience in one or more adult-life roles.

3. Students will develop respect for their cultural heritage and an understanding of themselves as individuals.

The Northwest Arctic School District has the following goals for schools:

1. Schools will involve the community in educational planning, instruction and evaluation.

2. Schools will encourage community residents to become professional educators.

3. Schools will encourage teachers to enhance their professional qualifications and instructional expertise.

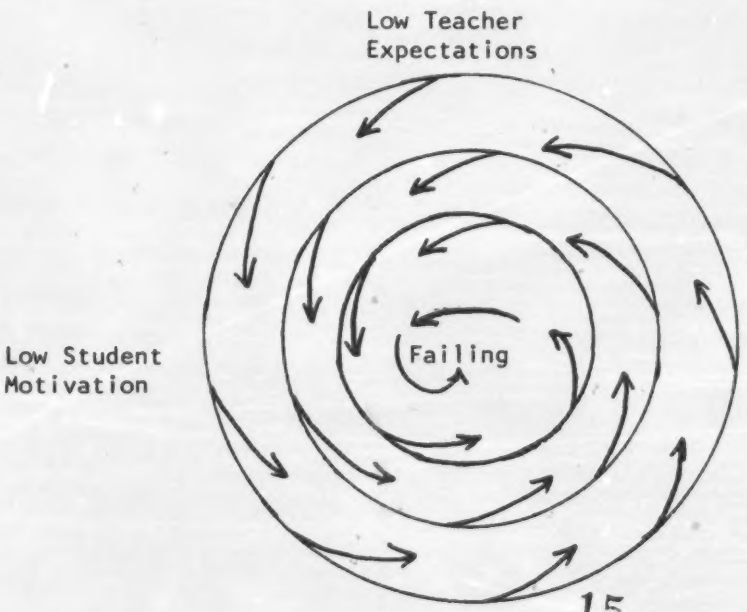
4. Schools will encourage students to take pride in the quality of their work and their personal accomplishments.

These goals were developed through a combined effort of parents, community leaders, and educators. They represent the dreams of the parents for their children as well as a philosophy for educators in the region.

What remains to be done in coming years includes the development of curriculum and evaluation guidelines for reaching these goals. The total district plan of service will probably be built on the foundation of combined individual student program plans as well as a flexible district-wide system of learning opportunities accessible to all students. The age-old rural school problems of high teacher turnover and small school size should diminish in importance as a continuous district-wide program of services based on student needs is implemented.

The Integrated Approach: An Example

The most devastating curriculum problem in the Northwest Arctic School District at this time is not language barriers, or cultural differences, or high teacher turnover, or any of the other myriad of issues which come up in discussions of rural cross-cultural education. The singularly most critical problem now existing in this district, and probably in most rural cross-cultural school systems in the arctic, is a "failure syndrome" typified by a downward cycle of teacher expectations, student motivation and student achievement.



The Downward Spiral of Teacher Expectations, Student Motivation and Student Achievement

The interrelatedness of these factors is one of the few proven relationships in education. [13] For all practical purposes, it makes no difference which of these factors may be causative. In fact, the considerable amount of time spent in trying to place blame on one or another aspect of the school-community is wasted, and probably contributes to the downward spiral. The simple fact is that our students are suffering as a result of this "failure syndrome."

Based on assumptions derived from educational and organizational research, and on the expressed wishes of the people, the Northwest Arctic School District is initiating a coordinated plan of activities designed to address all of these problematic factors at the same time. The idea is that no matter how this downward spiral got started, each of the factors has become problematic and all must be turned around in order to stop the downward spiral. Further, it is assumed that an improvement in any one of the factors will contribute to an improvement in the others. This is the system-wide approach to curriculum improvement in action. Shown on the next page are the activities that the district is pursuing as remedies in each of the needed areas of improvement.

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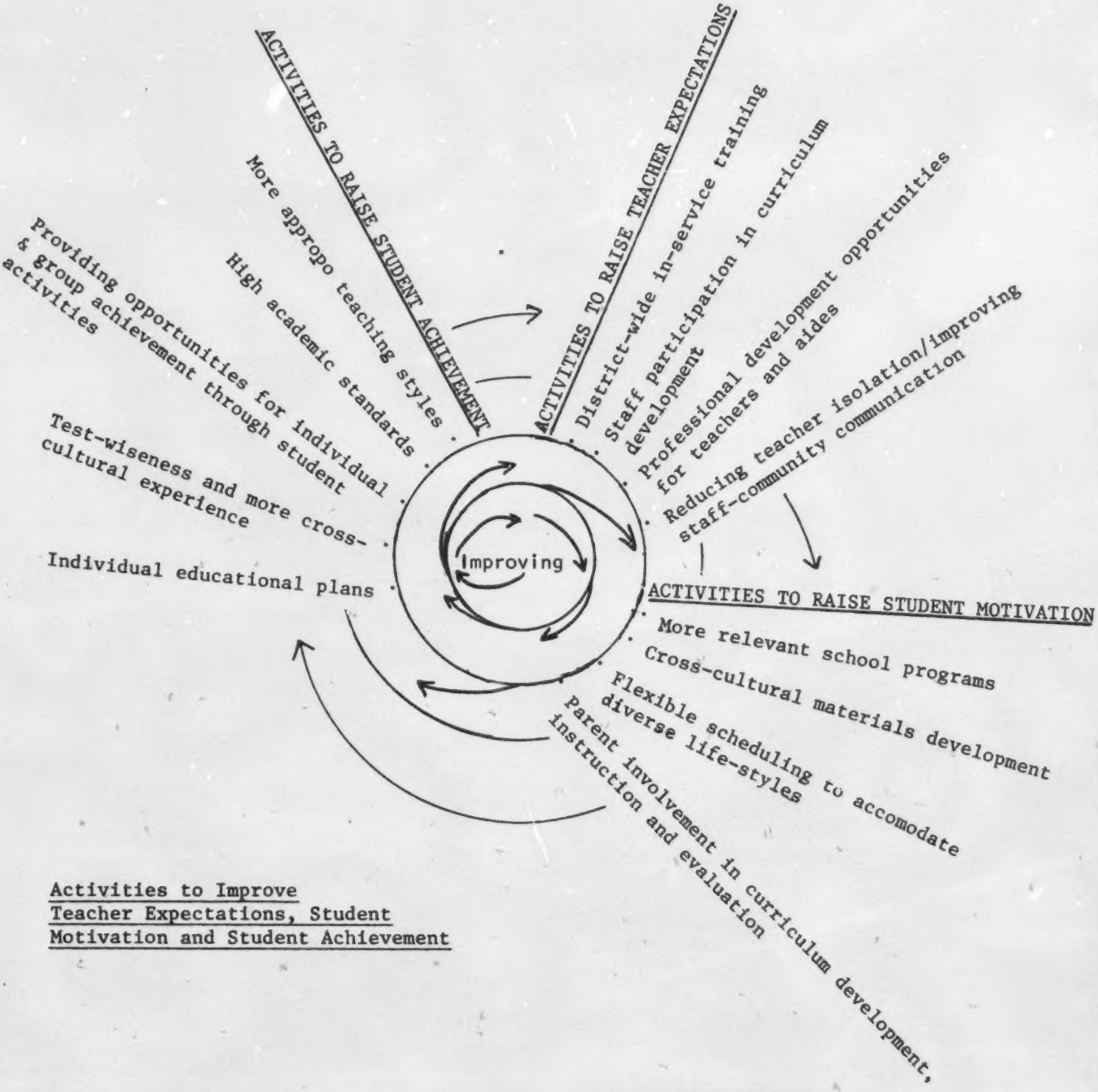
[12] Students are known to conform to the images of themselves presented at school, especially by the teacher. R. Rosenthal and L. Jacobson, Pygmalion in the Classroom: Teacher Expectations and Pupils' Intellectual Development (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1968), found that teachers who thought their students were high achievers, in fact, produced that result. R.P. McDermott in "Achieving School Failure: An Anthropological Approach to Illiteracy and Social Stratification," George Spindler, ed., Education Culture Process (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1974), pp. 82-118, attributes the high rate of reading disabilities among minority children to cross cultural conflict and miscommunication based on the ethnocentrism of majority culture teachers. Teachers in cross-cultural situations have difficulty in establishing and enforcing fair and appropriate classroom decorum, and thus may be much more lax than with students of their own cultural group.


ACTIVITIES TO RAISE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT
More appropo teaching styles
High academic standards
Providing opportunities for individual & group achievement through student activities
Test-wiseness and more cross-cultural experience
Individual educational plans
ACTIVITIES TO RAISE TEACHER EXPECTATIONS
District-wide in-service training
Staff participation in curriculum development
Professional development opportunities for teachers and aides
Reducing teacher isolation/improving staff-community communication
Improving
ACTIVITIES TO RAISE STUDENT MOTIVATION
More relevant school programs
Cross-cultural materials development
Flexible scheduling to accomodate diverse life-styles
Parent involvement in curriculum development, instruction and evaluation

Activities to Improve
Teacher Expectations, Student
Motivation and Student Achievement

Elements of program, staff and community development can all be seen in the activities designed to remedy the "failure syndrome" in the Northwest Arctic Schools. If, as the district hopes, the downward spiral of the "failure syndrome" can be stopped and turned into an upward spiral, or a "winning syndrome," then the resolution of other curricular problems will be simplified. When confronted in a positive atmosphere with a winning spirit, problems often-times find their own solutions.

The Funding Structure

Rural Education Attendance Areas such as the Northwest Arctic School District are funded by the State of Alaska on a per/pupil basis according to a Foundation Formula which is weighted to take rural economies and prices into account. The Foundation Program supplies regular instructional funds and funds for vocational education, special education and correspondence study programs where State approved plans have been submitted. In addition to the Foundation Program, the State supplies an "amount in lieu of local taxes" and a competitive grant program for bilingual/bicultural education funds. Boarding home and pupil transportation programs are cost reimbursable under a State approved plan.

While a great deal of the district's planning effort goes into developing the separate plans required to receive the "categorical" State funds (that is: vocational education, special education, correspondence study, and bilingual/bicultural education), these "categorical" programs only comprise about 15% of the total operating fund of the Northwest Arctic School District. Because of the time taken in developing different plans and monitoring systems for different categorical programs, the present funding structure makes it difficult to coordinate planning and spending with overall program priorities and needs. Some of the specific problems encountered under the present funding structure are:

1. Some categorical funds are fixed on an FTE basis, regardless of the program needs in any given year. This limits improvements in the quality of programs such as vocational education where equipment costs are high. It also leads to waste and unplanned spending during years when program needs do not rise to the allocation.

2. Actual expenditures under categorical programs are top-heavy in administrative cost because each program requires specialized planning, application and monitoring procedures. This contributes to a lack of coordination in planning as well as a reduction in the amount of money available for program improvement.

3. Students in small schools do not get an "equal educational opportunity" because small schools cannot generate adequate funds to meet special educational needs.

In fact, an analysis of the recently developed "Goals of the Northwest Arctic School District" would indicate that vocational and language and cultural programs should not be viewed as supplementary at all, but should be at the core of the regular instructional program. As such, the State funding rationales are in contradiction with the emerging rationales for educational planning and services in the Northwest Arctic.

The integrated curriculum approach is an attempt to reverse the historically discriminatory situation which places individual students in particular categories on the basis of program funding sources. Federal funds further the same problems through the identification of "Title I" students, "Indian Education" and "Johnson O'Malley" programs. [14] And here again, the planning and monitoring time taken up with separate procedures in each federal program further entrenches the "cubby-hole" curriculum and inhibits integrated planning and accounting for services to all students in the district. As will be explored in depth later in this paper, the legal and financial structures for rural arctic education are not sufficiently developed to take into account the situation where local control of education resides in the hands of a majority of minority people. And the somewhat paternalistic legal structures requiring

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[14] Perhaps the saddest effect of this system is seen in the village school where, during the past several years, 20 or 30 minutes each day has been set aside for Iñupiaq instruction. Students are heard to say "I'm going to bilingual now," rather than "I'm going to learn Iñupiaq now," or "I'm learning my language now," or anything in the Iñupiaq language itself. A demonstration of the effects of the separatist or "cubby-hole" curriculum: students have come to label themselves according to the sources of program funds rather than by their own experience. Thus Eskimo students call many of their extracurricular activities "Indian Education." The Northwest Arctic School District is very simply trying to make the curriculum whole again by integrating all categorical programs under a total plan of service based on the expressed goals and needs of the people.

special services to "minority" people have little applicability in a locally controlled minority community.

An integrated curriculum requires a different design for planning, reporting and monitoring the services provided to students. What is needed is a funding/monitoring system whereby a school district would develop a total plan of service which covers the special needs of individual students (whatever they may be) as well as the general education of all students. Under such a system, each school would submit a plan of service to the district. Individual school plans of service would reflect the program priorities established by the school board, and would describe instructional programs in detail.

Once the school has developed a total plan of service, a single school budget would be developed based on priority program needs. The district would compile individual school plans and needs, prepare a plan of service for coordinating and supporting instructional programs, and build a total district budget for state funds.

The district's plan might be described according to the functions that support instructional programs in the schools:

1. Planning and Technical Services
2. Advisory Mechanisms
3. Curriculum Development
4. Staff Development
5. Resource Services
6. Personnel Services
7. Program Services
8. Accounting
9. Evaluation and Monitoring

Program evaluation should be conducted through the same mechanism as program planning; measuring the extent to which the schools' and district's plans of service were actually implemented, and the extent to which expenditures matched program and instructional priorities.

In pursuit of an integrated curriculum, a plan for integrating categorical funds with regular state funds has been submitted to the Alaska Department of Education by the Northwest Arctic School District. This proposal calls for a resolution by the State Legislature to create a two-year project in which the restraints on categorical program funds would be removed while systems for integrated planning, monitoring and evaluation are developed by the district.

While the integration of federal funds into the regular budget is at present unfeasible, federal programs in the district will eventually be incorporated into the integrated planning process, as well as the total evaluation design.

Integrated funding is a vital link in the development of an integrated bilingual and cross-cultural curriculum for the rural arctic, and if the pilot project is approved, the Northwest Arctic School District may be instrumental in developing the organizational mechanisms supporting the integrated concept.

Legal Issues

Just as state and federal funding structures can constrain the curriculum, the legal structure can frustrate the integrated curriculum approach. This is especially true in rural Alaska which is so far removed from seats of government, and where unprecedented legal structures are being tried. The time and effort taken in developing plans and reports to assure compliance with various state and federal laws and regulations can in many instances inhibit the prescribed processes.

Pertinent to the development of bilingual and cross-cultural curriculum is the experience of the Northwest Arctic School District with the U.S. Office for Civil Rights.

When Rural Education Attendance Areas (REAA's) were formed in 1975, they inherited an action taken by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) in which the State Operated School System had been found in

"presumptive non-compliance" with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.[15] This meant that each one of the 21 REAA's was required to submit a plan for bilingual/bicultural education conforming with the "Lau Remedies" or guidelines laid down in the Supreme Court decision of the same name.[16]

On notification to appear at an administrative hearing set by OCR, in March of 1977, the Northwest Arctic School District submitted a "Lau Compliance Plan" to the Office for Civil Rights, which was rejected. The district then requested to negotiate directly with the OCR and invited their representatives to visit the Northwest Arctic in order to learn more about the unique conditions which surround linguistic and cultural issues in the district. Concurrently, the Northwest Arctic and a number of other REAA's filed a suit against the OCR, seeking to enjoin the administrative hearing called by OCR. Since then, the hearing has been postponed numerous times.

In the interim, the Alaska Department of Education offered to promulgate regulations for bilingual/bicultural education (something the Office for Civil Rights has not done), which if approved by OCR, would bring all school districts in the state into compliance with federal law. The state regulations were promulgated, revised and adopted, despite objections by some REAA's, including the Northwest Arctic. The state regulations were not accepted as a "Lau Compliance Plan" by OCR, however.

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[15] "No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefit of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance." 42 USC S 2000 (d). This is further clarified by the Educational Amendments of 1974: "No state shall deny equal educational opportunities to an individual on account of his or her race, color, sex or national origin by ... (f) The failure by an educational agency to take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by its students in its instructional program." 20 USC S 1703 (f).

[16] Lau v. Nichols, 414 US 563 (1974).

The Regional School Board of the Northwest Arctic School District has chosen to take a strong stand on the OCR action, and their position is as follows:

1. It is unfair that all 21 REAA's were found in presumptive non-compliance on the grounds that the State Operated School System had been found so, especially in light of the fact that REAA's were established in order to bring local control of education to the minority people who had previously been discriminated against.

2. The "Lau Remedies," which are not federal regulation, do not apply in a "majority-minority" situation, where the previously discriminated-against minority now has political and economic control. The all-Eskimo school board maintains that they cannot be found to discriminate against their own children. [17]

3. A time-consuming and costly language assessment has clearly shown that students in the district are English speakers. The district initiated an Iñupiaq language revival at its opening two years ago, and has consistently pursued the development of an education that will meet the linguistic and cultural needs of its students and redress the discriminations of former school administrations. But the Board maintains that a substantive bilingual education is not required in the Northwest Arctic because the students are not fluent in the Iñupiaq language, and therefore academic instruction in Iñupiaq would hinder, rather than help, the students' learning.

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[17] What is particularly ludicrous about the federal action is that the federal government is holding the local people responsible for inequities perpetrated by the government itself. It was the Bureau of Indian Affairs which effectually eliminated the Iñupiaq language in the first place, under an educational philosophy which has its roots in statements like this:

> "The Indian must conform to the White Man's ways, peaceably, if they will, forcibly if they must. They must adjust themselves to their environment and conform their mode of living, substantially, to our civilization. This civilization may not be the best possible, but it is the best the Indian can get. They cannot escape it, and must either conform to it or be crushed by it."

58th Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior, Government of the United States, October 1, 1889.

Now almost two years since the beginning of the Northwest Arctic School District's dealings with the U.S. Office for Civil Rights, and after considerable expenditures of staff time and money, no resolution of the civil rights action has come to pass. The OCR did finally visit the district in April of this year, and preliminary negotiations with the OCR were held in Seattle in May. The district continues to stand strong in their position that the Eskimo school board should decide what is best for the children of the district, and that the curriculum development process presently underway will result in the most appropriate and equitable education available to the children.

It is difficult to separate the moral from the legal issues in bilingual and cross-cultural education, and, beyond that, it is difficult to determine what of all the issues are actually educational ones. In the labyrinth of non-regulation regarding bilingual education, who is to decide what a "language barrier" is, and on what basis? And if such "language barriers" do exist, who is to decide what should be done about them: parents? educators? the courts? the federal government?

These issues have yet to be resolved on both the local and national levels, and not only in regard to language and culture. Compliance with state and federal law, and providing equality of educational opportunity for all students are major concerns in all school districts.

In synthesizing and analysing the possible effects of recent Supreme Court rulings on education for various minorities in the United States, Thomas Gilhool has observed that the courts may ultimately resolve the discrimination and equal educational opportunity issues thus:

> A process of individualized diagnosis of learning achievements and deficits and of learning styles and the specification of teaching techniques to approach short and long term learning objectives for each individual to assure an equal shot at

> education may be required for the equal treatment of all children as well as for those marked by handicap, or national origin-tied language, or race-tied cultural experience.[18]

He continues that:

> It may be, in reality as in myth, that in suburban and rural communities the 'close supervision of schools by the community' affords significant enough safeguards to assure many or most children an individualized education responsive to their needs and their parents' or their own wishes. In fact, my minds eye view of good subrurban (sic) schools is just that; parents conferring with teachers and insisting and getting; school boards that are not merely managing budgets, but which, elected by small constituencies, are setting and revising educational policies and forms and structures. Prototypical school systems. [19]

An apriori assumption of an integrated curriculum is its basis in the real needs of real children. Not by legal requirement or court order, but at the insistence of the community through their Regional School Board, the Northwest Arctic School District is already moving toward a total plan of educational services based on the cultural, linguistic, academic, vocational, and special needs of students. As a result, in future years, the district may find itself well ahead of the field in bilingual and cross-cultural curriculum development.

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[18]T.L. Gilhool, "PARC, Lau, Rodrigues and Individualized Education," p. 33, in Cross Reference: A Journal of Public Policy and Multicultural Education, Vol. I, No. 1, January-February, 1978 (Philadelphia: The J.B. Lippincott Co. for Multicultural Forum, Inc.) pp. 27-39.

[19]Ibid. p. 35.

GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING AN INTEGRATED BILINGUAL AND CROSS-CULTURAL CURRICULUM

To whatever extent the experience of the Northwest Arctic School District can be of value in other rural or cross-cultural situations, a summary of the critical points in the district's curriculum development process is offered here. These points are raised in the form of organizational patterns which have evolved in this new school district, and which seem to contribute to a successful curriculum development effort.

Attend to the Changing Nature of Society

To a great extent in the past, schools have had a "cultural blind spot" where students are concerned. Under the guise of treating all students equally, minority cultural ways have either been absent or highly stereotyped in the school curriculum.

Local control of education in rural Alaska has done much to counter the "cultural blind spot," and allow the present-day (not the stereotyped) needs and desires of the people to emerge. Necessary in establishing local control of schools are educational leaders who can enter a cross-cultural situation with an open mind: allowing people both to be who they are and become what they will.

Treat the Whole Curriculum

In an adequately integrated bilingual and cross-cultural curriculum, the school should reflect the community in every aspect, not just in revised text materials or special ethnic studies programs. Staff readiness, community support, and student motivation are keys to any successful curriculum, regardless of language or culture. Since the Northwest Arctic is an Iñupiat region, the schools should be Iñupiat institutions.

A wide vision of what schools do and can do, attention to the real needs of real children (not stereotyped children), and a positive attitude, can further the development of an integrated bilingual and cross-cultural curriculum.

Be Honest

Centuries of wrongs can't be righted overnight. But one of the purposes of working to develop a cross-cultural curriculum is to resolve the contradictions, or bridge the gap, between what is said and what is done.

Open advisory channels through which people can be heard are vital to planning as well as to developing community support for school programs. In the case of the Northwest Arctic, the two curriculum advisory committees as well as a number of informal channels are open. Again, regardless of language or culture, people everywhere want to be treated with respect. When the Community Advisory Committee on Curriculum was asked to decide on a name for the district curriculum, they chose Iñugułiq kamaksriigałikun, which means in English, "growing up with respect." Iñugułiq kamaksriigałikun has become the theme of the district's curriculum development efforts.

Being honest means stating things such that others can understand, weigh the consequences, and render their own judgements. The curricular implication is that policies, procedures, guidelines and such should be stated simply and clearly, and time must be taken to explain new ideas.

Being honest means not advertising things that cannot be delivered. In the past, people in rural cross-cultural schools have been promised much more than they ever got. The Northwest Arctic School District is attempting to focus its effort on a small number of clear and attainable educational goals, which are identified as the most pressing by the people themselves.

Be United

The only truly bilingual and cross-cultural curriculum is one in which educators and community are united in their view of what the schools are doing. Patience and compromise are keys to developing cross-cultural unity.

Once wide agreement has been reached on important curricular issues, the combined school staff and school community will be unbeatable in finding solutions to curricular problems. In a like manner, when staff and community stand strong together with a clarity of purpose, interference from outside the district can be minimized.

A Final Note

So the curriculum developers in a bilingual cross-cultural situation need to practice the art of listening; keep an open mind about the curricular imperatives of language and culture; operationalize the expressed desires of the people in the form of a clear, continuous, simply stated, easily understood and workable curriculum; translate and negotiate the important curricular issues among the different interest groups; and be ready to learn much more than expected.

The curriculum in the Northwest Arctic School District is being (and probably should be) developed "from scratch," because of the unique political, economic, social and cultural changes taking place in the region. As can be inferred from this paper, the emphasis is on process and involvement, with a determination to make the products conform with the expressed needs of the people.

To those who thought this paper would address the linguistic and pedagogical considerations in an Iñupiaq language revival, or outline the language and culture components of the district's school programs, both of these statements may be available at a later date. The district is at the present time conducting curriculum development for a K-12 infusion of Iñupiat cultural heritage, Alaska studies, and NANA region affairs, as well as a K-12 Iñupiaq language program designed to revive fluency and achieve literacy. At the same time, the district is proceeding to develop a continuous and integrated district curriculum which will meet the individual and collective needs of students in the region. Programs for staff development, including encouraging Iñupiat teacher-trainees, are being initiated on a district-wide basis. Program planning and fiscal planning are being coordinated in order to unify the diverse district programs toward the end of meeting all students' needs.

All of these processes are woven with the threads of staff development, program development, and community development, on the loom of Iñugułiq kamaksriigałikun. Time will tell if the Northwest Arctic has chosen the right path.